

A
DISSERTATION
ON
Royal Societies.

IN
THREE LETTERS

FROM
A NOBLEMAN on his Travels, to
a Person of Distinction in *Sclavonia.*

CONTAINING
An ACCOUNT of an ASSEMBLY
of a ROYAL ACADEMY of
SCIENCES at PARIS,

A
DESCRIPTION of a MEETING of
a ROYAL SOCIETY in LONDON,

AND
A COFFEE-HOUSE CONVERSATION.

With Explanatory NOTES.

L O N D O N :

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NOTATION

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E D I T O R,

Who, like Authors and Sovereign Princes,
speaks of himself in the Plural Number.

THE Reader is admonished not to suppose these Letters the Product of either of those random Genius's, ABRAHAM JOHNSON, or RICHARD ROE. The Author of them is as distinct from both these, as they are from one another. They fell into our Hands by perfect Accident, and we flatter ourselves the World will be of our Opinion, that they are too valuable, and of too much public Utility, to be buried in Oblivion, or confined to the Limits of a single Nation.

Those who have collected the Works of the two very eminent Authors just mentioned, may be advised, however, from the Similiarity of the Subject, to bind these Letters with them; and the several Translators of those Pieces into the French, Italian, and German Languages, are to be reminded, that the Collection will hardly appear perfect, unless this be added to them. The noble Author had left England, at least London,

before this Copy of his Letters fell into our Hands, so that we cannot boast of having his Permission to print them: All we can say for ourselves, is, that we are assured no Reader of Discernment will doubt their Genuineness or Authenticity; and that as they certainly can be no Discredit to the Person who wrote them, we cannot suppose ourselves chargeable with any Fault toward him, in the printing them.

PROLEGOMENA OF THE EDITOR.

IN order to render this our Publication as like as possible, to the most recent Works of the Members of that very honourable Society, whose Conduct and Regulations have given Rise to it; and especially to such of them, as have been received with the Thanks, and honoured with the public Approbation, of that great Body*. We have judged it necessary to prefix to it the following Tables, which we desire the Reader will find out to be very consequential, and necessary.

* See the Rev. Mr Griffith Hughes's *Natural History of Barbadoes*, which has a Plate inscribed to the President of the Royal Society, and the Names of many of the most eminent Members of that Body as Subscribers; which was in part read to the Society; and the whole recommended before the Publication, by a printed Certificate of Dr Stephen Hales, a very distinguished Member of it.

TABLE



I.

TABLE of CONTENTS,

In which the principal Subjects treated of
are omitted.

1. *Encomium on a Paris Academy.*
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3. *News from the City of Wonders.*
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lish Academist.*
5. *Histories of Resignations.*
6. *Panegyric upon a Candle-Snuffer.*

II.

TABLE of Texts of the Antient
Writers explained,

Some of which are left darker than they were
before.

1. *Hippocrates on the Virtues of Orpiment.*
2. *Dioscorides on the Use of Sandarach.*
3. *Avicenna on the Nature of Gum Juniper.*
4. *Serapio on the Poison of Arsenic.*

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TABLE of Authors quoted,

Not one of which the Person who quotes
them ever read.

1. Boer-

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|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Boerhaave. | 3. Stahl. |
| 2. Homberg. | 4. Geoffroy. |

IV.

To this we are to add another Table of an unprecedented Kind; that is, of the Names of Authors quoted, which the Writer of these Letters has read. These are,

1. Joseph Addison.
2. Nathanael Lee.
3. Alexander Pope.
4. Samuel Garth.

V.

TABLE of Errata.

In the Matter of this Table we must, with all due Humility acknowledge, that we are greatly inferior to the Authors we have attempted to model ourselves upon: It is become a Fashion, to have two or three of these Tables in different Corners of the Works, published by People whose Names are dignified with F. R. S. We have only one, and that (excepting for this Observation) has nothing in it: If we had known of but a single Blemish of this kind in our Publication, we would have paid the Reader the Compliment of correcting it in better Time, which (whatever Authors may think, who are Members of August Bodies) we cannot help supposing might be done with as little Trouble.

Having



Having thus gone through the whole modern Form of Preliminaries, we now deliver to the Reader the Treatise itself; acknowledging, however, that we fear, notwithstanding all our Pains to give it the Form of a Societarian Work, it will still differ in a main Point, namely, that (to our own Shame be it confessed) the Body of the Book will be better than the Preamble.

L E T T E R I.

My very dear Lord,

WHEN I took leave of you to embark for my Tour, you flattered me into an Opinion that the Separation we were entering on would be a Concern to you only alleviable by my Letters. If you were in earnest, I cannot write you too frequent, or too long ones; if you deceived me, I cannot take a better Method than this of punishing you for appearing good-natured at the Expence of your Sincerity. You start at the Suspicion! in *Sclawonia* I should have deserved Contempt for it; but I am now in a Part of the World where Politeness is more a Fashion: I give you a Specimen of the Advantages of it.

Pleasure and Improvement are the two great Ends of travelling; but, to confess a Truth to you,

you, that is neither of *French* nor *English* Breed, I shall have but a half Relish for the one, and a half Desire after the other, when I suspect you of not receiving at least an equal Share from the Accounts I transmit to you.

Tho' War has been my Trade, I am not without a warm Affection for the Sciences and polite Literature. You will do me the Justice to remember, that I have rather been torn from these, than neglected them. As soon as I found myself on foreign Ground, and disengaged from the Fatigues of my Profession, nothing gave me so much Pleasure as the recollecting that I was now at Leisure to admire, at least, if not to make myself a Master of them. In *France* I visited, with this Intent, *The Academy of Sciences*. I was in Rapture when I sat down there: Every thing was Wisdom, Regularity, and Order: Methought I saw about me the Sages of a hundred Ages back, restored to Life again, and deliberating the Means of Knowledge, of Health, and of a thousand Benefits to the grateful World. I had determined to write to you in the Midst of all this Transport; but, that I might not give the Praise of the first Society in the World to what might possibly, on a farther Enquiry, prove but the Second, I afterwards resolved to see *England*, before I gave you my Thoughts on it, that I might be able to say whether it excelled, or fell short of a like Establishment there, which I had heard of under the Name of *The Royal Society*. On my Arrival soon after in *London*,
my



my first Enquiry was after this useful and honourable Body. I found the Place of their Weekly Meetings, and I sat down among them.

Must I confess to you the Difference between this Assembly and that I had been so lately charmed with! I love the *English*, every Man who has been among them does so; but I hope I shall always love Truth, even better than *Sclavonia*. Instead of the Decency and Order of the *French Academy*, every thing here was Irregularity and Confusion. Every thing——but it shall establish or condemn itself according to your own Opinion: I won't take upon me to determine between them, I'll fairly lay before you what I saw and heard at both, and leave the Decision to yourself.

The whole Body at the *French Academy* had been seated some Minutes, and a strict Silence had reigned for that Time, when one of the honorary Members * opened the Business of the Meeting, by informing the President, That, “ as he thought the Duty of those Members who were honoured with a Place among that learned Body, though uninformed of the things necessary to be discussed by it, to use that Interest which naturally attended the Rank that had procured them their Admission there, to the Services of the Academy; he had no

* The *French Academy* consists of four Kinds of Members, distinguished by the Names of *honorary*, *pensionary*, *associate*, and *adjunct*.

sooner heard, that, in a distant Part of the King's Dominions a Substance had been happily used in the Cure of Diseases, which was generally esteemed a Poison, than he took the necessary Measures toward the obtaining a more perfect Information of the Fact; and that, in Consequence of this, he now had the Honour to lay before them a Memoir on the Subject, drawn up by the very Person who had used the Medicine."

He delivered the Paper into the Hands of the President with great Respect, and added, with a Condescension that became a Nobleman honoured by being admitted among his Inferiors, " That he delivered it to the free Disquisitions of the Members of that Body; and that, from the Moment it was received there, he should forget that himself had any Concern in the procuring it."

After the Thanks of the Body, delivered with great Politeness by the President, the Paper was given into the Hands of a Secretary, and read.

I would not pretend, by Memory, to do Justice to it's Contents, or to the subsequent Reasonings on the Subject; but the Notes I took of it at that Time are before me, and you shall share the Benefit of them.

The Author, after observing that *Sandarach* was a Substance usually esteemed a Poison, added, that he had now, by an Experience of four Years, found it, on the the contrary, to be, in Reality, a safe internal Medicine, and
a Cure

a Cure for many Disorders of the Lungs, which scarce any thing else could reach. In Confirmation of what he advanced, he recited at large the Circumstances of several Cures he had performed with it.

When the Paper had been a few Moments concluded, one of the Pensionaries got up, and, after saying some very handsome things of the Persons who employed themselves in so noble an Office as that of discovering Remedies for Diseases; added, That, "as Health was the greatest of all natural Blessings, and the restoring it, when impaired, was the greatest Benefit of this Kind that one Man could do another, the utmost Precision was required in deliberating on the Means of it; that, unhappily, there was great Error and Uncertainty in the Names of Medicines; that it was necessary, on this Occasion, to observe, that there were two very different substances called by Medical Authors *Sandarach*, the one of which was a Refin, produced from a Vegetable, the other a Mineral, found in the Earth; and that it was of the latter, not of the former *Sandarach*, that this Author wrote."

Another of the Pensionaries arose, when this Gentleman had been some Time sat down, and observed, That "the Occasion of the Confusion just mentioned in regard to the two different Substances called *Sandarach*, was the different Sense in which the *Greek* and *Arabian* Writers had used that Word: That the *Greeks* used it always to signify the Mineral Substance intended by this Author; the *Ar-*
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bians,

bians, to express the Refin of the *Juniper Tree* : He added, that *Dioscorides* recommends *Sandarach* in the very Cases in which this Author gave it, and that *Hippocrates* also prescribes it in Doses of ten and twelve Grains. It is certain that the *Greeks* knew no *Sandarach* but this Mineral Kind, and therefore it appears, said he, that it was used at other Times beside this, in Cases of this very Sort, though of some Ages it has now been esteemed poisonous."

The Gentleman who had made this Observation was no sooner sat down, than one of the Associates rose up : He observed, That " many incontestible Histories were extant of Persons dying by taking Mineral *Sandarach*, and referred to the Registers of the Academy itself for them, desiring, that, till those Cases were well explained, the Sanction of that Academy might not be given to the internal Use of a Medicine which stood as the Cause of the Death of so many Persons."

The President, as this Gentleman spoke, minuted down on Paper the Volumes he referred to, and without interrupting either him or the Audience, delivered the Note to an Attendant, whom a Look informed that he was to bring before him what was written in it.

On the closing of the Associate's Discourse, one of the *Adjuncts* rose up, and begged the Permission of the Academy, as he had before considered the Subject of the present Enquiry, to be indulged a few Words. He observed, that

that “ of the Persons who had died by taking, what was called in those Accounts, *Sandarach*, the greater Part were such as could by no Means procure so scarce a Drug: That it appeared probable they had died not by *Sandarach*, but common red Arsenic, which was too generally called by it's Name; and was the only Thing so called, that the Druggists in general knew. He spoke largely on the fatal Error of confounding this Substance with the genuine *Sandarach*; and the yellow Arsenic, another fatal Poison, with Orpiment, a safe and innocent Mineral: But, he added, that this was not all; for that he had discovered two very different Kinds, even of the *Mineral Sandarach* itself: The one which had it's red Colour from an Admixture of *Arsenic*, and was truly poisonous; the other, which owed that Colour only to subterranean Heat, and was perfectly innocent. He enforced the Truth of this, by observing that common yellow Orpiment becomes red, by only melting over the Fire; and concluded, with observing, that it was difficult to give certain Directions in so weighty an Affair; but that the *Sandarach*, which was made up of Flakes like Talk, and which was flexible, was always innocent.”

During the Time in which this Gentleman was speaking, the Registers of the Academy before-mentioned, and several other Papers which the President had thought also necessary, were brought before him: The Servants had understood his Intentions on such slight Signals,
and

and had obeyed them with such silent and un-interrupting Caution, that it was impossible to have found, but by the Effect, that any such Business had been done, or even such People been in the Room. The Adjunct had continued his Harangue without a Whisper to interrupt, or the slightest Motion to discompose him; and the President had occasionally cast his Eye over the Papers before him, as he went through it: At the Conclusion of it, a Silence of some Minutes declared, that none of the Members thought it necessary to say any thing more on the Subject: On this the President rose up, and spoke. He recapitulated the whole that had been said on the Occasion: He paid a due Honour to the *Greeks*, for their Accuracy in distinguishing Medicines: He censured the *Arabians*, for giving Occasion to Error in this, and many other Instances of a like Kind, by their giving the antient Names of Drugs to others entirely different from them: He did Honour to *Boerhaave*, *Homberg*, and *Stabl*, for the Distinctions they had established on the same Subjects; he mentioned *Geoffry* with Respect, for having collected judiciously from all these; and after giving abundant Proof of a masterly Knowledge of the Subject, he concluded, "But you, O *Adjunct*! It is you we are to thank for the perfect Understanding of what all these, though they have attempted carefully, have known but partially: The Registers before me confirm all your Quotations of Facts, and your Explanation of the Differences of

of

of the Substance under Consideration will long do you Honour: Happy, concluded he, is the Academy that sees, while it's Veterans decline, such rising Genius's to supply their Places."

When the President had finished this Harangue, it was declared, as the Sense of the Academy, that pure mineral Sandarach was a safe and powerful Medicine: But that as there were nice Distinctions between the salutiferous and poisonous Kinds of it, it was expected of every body to forbear the Use of it, till there should be certain and invariable Characters established, by which it might always be known to be genuine, and of the proper Kind.

Thus ended the Business of the Meeting. I left the Place, full of Acknowledgments of the Utility of such an Establishment; and scarce knowing whether most to admire, the Merit of the young Adjunct, or the Candour of so great a Body, in their free Acknowledgment and Encomium of it.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER II,

Which the malicious Reader may possibly imagine the former was only intended as an Introduction to.

My very dear Lord,

IN my last I did myself the Honour of describing to you an Assembly of the philosophic Community of *Paris*. I now transmit to you, from the other great Seat of the Sciences, *London*, the History of a Meeting of a Body established with a like Intention here.

I have been hitherto serious, the Subject has required it; but if a rational Creature may, on any Occasion, be allowed to laugh at things intended to be grave ones, here is the first and greatest of all Provocations to it!

It was scarce a Fortnight from the Time when I had been transported, as I have already told you, with the Order and Regulations of the *French Academy*, almost as much as with the Importance of the Subjects of their Disquisitions, and with their masterly Knowledge of them; when, full of the Expectation of a second Entertainment of the same kind, I entered the Room appointed for the Meetings of a Royal Society here. Let me, if I can, describe the Scene to you.

A motley Mixture of all Kinds of Men, from the Fop to the Philosopher, from the Lord to the Mechanic, filled the spacious Room: At their Head, full of that imaginary Importance which is the Consequence of imaginary Adoration, enthroned with all the Dignity of a Solomon *, the President, swoln to a double Size with the Honour of his Office, filled the capacious Chair of State.

*Not with more Glee, by Hands pontific crown'd,
Midst Scarlet Hats wide waving, circled round,
Rome in her Capitol saw Querno sit,
Thron'd on seven Hills, the Antichrist of Wit.*

I had just cast my Eye upon this venerable Figure, when the redoubled Clamour of a whole Assembly talking at once, some of where they had dined, some of where they intended to sup, and some, of whose Perriwig was the best powdered, bespoke the Society's entering upon Business.

The weighty President, till this Time immoveable as a Statue, rising reluctant from his Seat of Ease, and taking off his Hat, seemed now, with lack-lustre Eye, as *Shakespear* calls it, to scan the Multitude before him, and, with a Lip weighed down with Discontent, to say, *A Pox upon you for a Pack of noisy Miscreants, that a Man can't enjoy his own No-*

* A Slavonian Name for a Lord Chancellor.

Attempted in the Manner of Notes on the *Philosophical Transactions*, signed C. M.

thoughts in Peace for you! and, when he had looked this; he said over again. To this succeeded the reading a List of tramontane Names, the important Catalogue, as I was afterwards informed, of the People who had no Right to be present, and of those who had been wise enough to introduce them. This was pronounced in that sort of Recitative (if it be allowed to apply that Term to all Noises that are between reading and singing) in which Boys read at School the Genealogies of the *Old Testament*. Thus much of the Entertainment I take to have been furnished by the unwillingly-disturbed Gentleman just mentioned; but, my Situation among the Strangers not having given me an Opportunity of seeing him at that Time, I do not take upon me to be positive about it. The important Recital I am, however, to do the whole Body present the Honour to acknowledge, that they paid a very reverend Attention to, and received in all the Sadness of a profound Silence.

It was succeeded by a second Lesson read, but not without some Hesitation, by a Person at the Left-hand of the Chair, who, to do him no more than Justice, seemed not only to have borrowed the Voice and Cadence, but the very Face of the great Patron of his Fortune, who had entertained the Body before him.

This Part of the Evening's Business seemed somewhat of the longest: People snarled, and scolded, and grumbled at it; but it continued. I was, at that Time, so lucky to imagine it
delivered

delivered in a Language I did not understand; but I afterwards learnt that it was no other than the Minutes of the last Meeting, drawn up by the very sagacious Mr *Deville*, who read it. A Gentleman, according to the History I at that Time received of him, at least upon a Footing with his Namesake in most of his good Qualities, and who, eager upon the getting rid of this Part of his troublesome Office, never failed to draw at full Length such Papers as he knew the Writers of, had by that Time, learned to be ashamed of; or, to condemn to a bare Mention any thing that he fancied might give it's Author Credit, or the Hearers Pleasure on the Repetition.

All this was but preparatory, however, to the grand Scene I had to be entertained with. The Forms of the Society were now over, and down we sat to Business. "Gentlemen, *declaims the President, putting his Hand into a long green Parchment that lay before him*, I have received, some Time since, a very curious Paper from M. *Sphere*, a Foreign Member of this Society; if it is your Pleasure Dr *Mortifie* shall read it to you."

I could not for some Moments learn the Occasion of a Multitude of different Monosyllables that I heard uttered during the Course of this Prelude to the Paper: They were, as near as I can recollect, Pish!—Poh! Shsh! Shaw! Pshaw! and the like, and were accompanied with an amazing Variety of inarticulate Grunts.

I was, in the Honesty of my Heart, condemning the Members very severely, and the Strangers much more so, for expressing their Dissatisfaction at a Paper sent a thousand Miles for their Entertainment, and that before they had heard a Word of it : But my Exclamations were suppressed by the History of the Green Parchment.

“ That Parchment, Sir, *says a wicked, witty*
 “ *Fellow to his Companion at my Elbow*, is, if I
 “ may be allowed to *cabbage* a Phrase from a very
 “ low Employ, to suit a very low Subject, the
 “ *Hell of the Royal Society*. 'Tis a dark Gulph,
 “ whose yawning Mouth is ever open to re-
 “ ceive such Remnants, Shreds and Corners of
 “ Discoveries, as even Thievery itself does not
 “ at present see it can possibly make any Use
 “ of. As the cross-legged Botcher is, how-
 “ ever, when all things else have failed him,
 “ reduced to the Necessity of descending into
 “ the Grave of Refuse, which he celebrates, un-
 “ der this Name, to patch up his otherwise idle
 “ Day's Employment ; so with us, when the
 “ unwearied Diligence of our *worthy Presi-*
 “ *dent* has travelled through the Town, and
 “ begged in vain from Door to Door, for
 “ Matter for the Evening's Entertainment,
 “ we are obliged to have Recourse to this
 “ dark Reservoir of embryo Nonsense : He
 “ takes, as you see, what comes uppermost of
 “ all the motley Pieces condemned at first to
 “ Darkness there, and never destined to have
 “ had that Doom revoked but on such an
 “ Emergency.” If

If I could have doubted the Veracity of this whimsical Account, the well-named Brother Officer of Mr *Deville's* would have immediately convinced me of my Error. He very gravely began with the Date of the Letter, which unluckily happening to be half a Dozen Year backwards, set the applauding Society into so lasting a Roar, as happily prevented my hearing any thing more of what it contained, than the Conclusion; in which the Author, after summing up his Proofs, declared that the Society was to have but a few more Meetings, for that the whole visible Creation was drawing to it's final Period, and that the Sun, the Stars, and the Earth, were all very soon to meet together in the Center, and we were to see, as *Oedipus* says,

*The Globe itself, and all it's marble Roof,
Meet like the Hands of Jove, and crush Mankind.*

A very delicate and favourite Member of this philosophic Body would have fainted at the terrible Prediction, had not a surly Surgeon at his Elbow, to save the Trouble of an Operation which he knew he should not be paid for, told him, he might set his Heart at Ease, for that the Time of the Prediction had been elapsed a Twelvemonth, before the Paper that contained it was read to them. After some other Apprehensions of the same Kind, which had been strengthened by the Honour done *M. Sphere*, by the President, for his curious
and

and learned Communication, were dissipated by the Friends of the Sufferers, in the same Sort of Way, a new Object engrossed all our Attention.

A meagre, muse-rid Mope, adust and thin,
(as Mr Pope has it) whose crawling Aspect spoke a grovelling Soul, whose shrivelled Form seemed to say, Behold *Tithonus* raised to Skin and Bones again; reached out his lengthened Arm over the gorgeous Mace, that adorned the Front of the Table, and delivered in a Paper, accompanied with many Cringes, and some inarticulate Sounds. “ Why there now !
“ exclaims again the Author of the History of
“ the green Bag, (who, to my great good
“ Fortune, still kept his Post just by me) that
“ bloodless Grasshopper knew well enough the
“ Distress of the Night, before : Fifty to one
“ but he has, this very Morning, refused, to
“ the sweating President, that Dissertation up-
“ on nothing, which he is now presenting us
“ with, that he might indulge himself in the
“ Pride of shewing to the whole Company
“ of Strangers present, the Nakedness of the
“ Body he belonged to, and his own Importance in the Power he had to have concealed it: See, continued he, if the very Eye
“ of the triumphant Vermin does not say,
“ *Now am not I the Royal Society?*”

I was acquiescing to the Charge, when the President, with a Glow of Crimson over all his Face, told us, *Gentlemen, Mr Bokur has just now presented to me a Letter from Mr Hardy-*
run

run of NEERWOCH. More was said ; but it was impossible to hear more : An unlucky Wag behind me, on the mention of the Word *Neerwoch*, silenced the Chit-chat of half a dozen People just by him, with *Hush ! More News from the City of Wonders !* The general Hum that succeeded this, though it drowned the Voice of the Secretary, as much as the surly Monosyllabic Buz at the green Bag had done before, was, however, of a much more pleasurable Kind : Every thing now was Mirth, not Dissatisfaction ; and I began to look with a very favourable Eye upon Mr Bokur, who, I found, had Talents enough to raise him to the Character of Buffoon to a whole Society. The general Pleasantry held a long Time : But at length, as Men will be tired of every thing, the Company grew weary at once of the Laugh and of the Paper, and sat down to chat of indifferent Matters.

I had now an Opportunity to find, that the Secretary had been all this time delivering the Compliments of Mr *Hardyrun* to the Society ; and his Encomiums on that great Ornament of it, his Friend Mr Bokur ; and that he was now entering on the Matter : I heard distinctly that the Subject of the Paper was a *Dwarf* then residing at *Neerwoch* ; but what Trade he was of ; whether he was born there, or came from elsewhere ; whether his Father or Mother were the Elder ; and a Number of other curious Particulars of the like Kind I wholly

wholly lost, by the Interruption of the necessary Offices of the Society.

In attempting to do Justice to the Order and Regularity of the *French* Academy, I mentioned to you, my Lord, the Observance, Readiness, and silent Attention of the Servants. Here every Thing wore a contrary Aspect. The Bell was rung sixteen Times successively, and half as many Messages to the Attendant were mouth'd along, about, and across the Assembly, before the President could get the Candles snuffed : And the short Sentences of, *Pray let me come by*, and *D—n you*, *you tread upon my Corns*, took up an equal Share of the Time of the Reading.

The long, long Paper at length drew toward a Period : But on now looking about me, I found half the Company, at least, were wanting ; they had walked away one by one, quite wearied out with it : The Remainder were formed into Parties, in the several Corners of the Room : The dreaming Secretary yawned over every Period, but he went on ; and I had an Opportunity of hearing, at the Conclusion, the most surprising and accurate Declarations of the whole Paper, which were, that *This Dwarf eat and drank like other People ; and that he weighed a certain Quantity, Cloaths and all ; and measured a certain height with his Shoes on.*

The President, good Man, from the natural Effects of a full Dinner, and a dull Discourse, was all this while asleep : He was
waked,

waked, however, at the Conclusion, by a confused Murmur of C——e Bokur, and d——n Hardyrun! He started from his Nap, rubbed his Eyes, and after muttering, *I don't know what all this is, not I.* He pronounced much more articulately, *Gentlemen, you will be pleased to let me return your Thanks to Mr Bokur, and to desire him to return your Thanks to Mr Hardyrun, for this very curious and learned Communication.*

The Society declared their Approbation, in the usual Form of Applause: The Laugh went round; and, by that Time every body's Cheeks were tired with the Motion, the Candle-snuffer caught it: This useful Minister laughed louder, and laughed longer than the whole Society had done; and from the pitiable Infirmities of Age, which will overtake the greatest Men, the violent Laugh of this reverend Gentleman was succeeded by as violent a Fit of coughing, which echoed through the Room, and lasted till the uninterruptible Doctor, who still,

*In one unalter'd Tone,
Thro' the long, heavy, painful Page, drawl'd on,*
had finished the Paper that occasioned it, and had got into the Middle of another, which had been slyly conveyed to him out of the already-celebrated Green Parchment.

If any body had been inclined to attend to the Remainder of this new Paper, *Bokur* forbade it: Full of Resentment at the Ridicule that had been thrown upon the Memoir of his Friend; he descended from that Seat which he had

identically filled for the last four hundred Meetings, condescended to honour our End of the Room with his Presence, and, mustering up all the Passion he could raise, with a Look big with Anger and Disdain, harangued the laughing Fraternity in this Manner: " Do you know, " Gentlemen, who it is that you are treating with this Contempt? Do you consider " that it is Mr *Hardyrum*! that *Hardyrum* " who has been the greatest Friend the Royal " Society ever had: Who has given you, within the last two Years, more Papers, and " longer Papers, than any ten of your Members put together! What Place has furnished " you with so many Accounts of things as " *Neerwoch*? and who has communicated them " all but Mr *Hardyrum*? Examine your printed " Transactions, Gentlemen, and see what " Name (except my own) occurs there so often as that of Mr *Hardyrum*? Remember " your Meetings during this Time, and tell " me which of them has not been favoured " with a Paper of Mr *Hardyrum*'s?"——The angry Gentleman was going on in this haughty Way, when he found the greater Part of the very Remainder of the Society had left him: Whom not even Mr *Hardyrum*'s Dullness could drive out, the Friend of Mr *Hardyrum* had:

*So when at Bathos all the Giants strove
T' invade the Skies, and wage a War with Jove,
Soon as the Asps of old Silenus bray'd,
The trembling Squadrons in Confusion fled.*

A grave Member of the Body, however, who had

had not yet spoke, now gave him his Sense of the Merits of the Controversy in this Manner :

“ You don’t yet seem to understand Mr
 “ *Bokur!* that, what you are boasting of in
 “ your Friend’s Name, is the very thing we
 “ are complaining of. The Frequency and
 “ Length of Mr *Hardyrin*’s Papers has taught
 “ the Royal Society to hate both his Name,
 “ and, to tell you a Truth you seem much
 “ unacquainted with, your’s too : For you are
 “ to know we suspect you as the real Author
 “ of one half of them : Belong they, however,
 “ to which of you they will, what is there,
 “ let me freely ask you, that either you or he
 “ are qualified to inform us about? Do you
 “ know, Sir, that this Society meets to improve
 “ the Knowledge of Natural History? And
 “ what Part of Natural History is it possible
 “ that you or Mr *Hardyrin* can suppose your-
 “ selves acquainted with? Does he even know
 “ so much as the names of the trifling things
 “ he has furnished your trifling Collection
 “ with? or do you know them when they are
 “ there? You who (but that in your Ear)
 “ at this Time know you cannot distinguish
 “ an Oyster from a *Nautilus!* But say, there
 “ are other Subjects we are sometimes enter-
 “ tained on, such as Chemistry, Mechanics,
 “ Astronomy, Hydrostatics, Metallurgy! do
 “ either you, or Mr *Hardyrin*, know any
 “ thing of any one of all these? Every body
 “ here, I believe, is ready to answer No, for
 “ you both, Learning have either of you?

“ Dare you but say it? Is there a Paper that
 “ either of you has ever communicated to the
 “ Society that is not either false or silly?—
 “ In fine, is there any one Science, or any one
 “ Branch of polite Literature that either he or
 “ you have any the least Knowledge of? If
 “ there is, tell me the Name of it, and inform
 “ me of a thing that, possibly, no body has at
 “ present any Idea of.”

The modest Mr *Bokur* was silent; and the
 sensible, though not over good-natured Accuser,
 went on: “ We know you have the Vanity
 “ and Arrogance to declare abroad, that you
 “ and your wise Friend, that is (as we very
 “ shrewdly suspect) you and yourself, are the
 “ Royal Society: That to you it is owing that
 “ this Society at present is any thing: But ’tis
 “ Time you should be informed, Sir, that ’tis
 “ you who have, more than all People, con-
 “ tributed to sink the Society you pretend to
 “ have been supporting, to the low Ebb it is
 “ now at. Ask what it is that has rendered
 “ the Philosophical Transactions of late so ri-
 “ diculous throughout *Europe*, has any thing
 “ had so great a Share in it as the Papers of
 “ Mr *Bokur* and of the Friends of Mr *Bokur*;
 “ or, in other Words, of Mr *Bokur* and him-
 “ self, under several Names. Ask what it is
 “ that makes us despicable at home? what so
 “ much as the Share Mr *Bokur* and his Friends
 “ bear in the Business of our Meetings. If
 “ you want Conviction of this, *continued he*,
 “ look about you; of fifty People, who were
 “ present

“ present when Mr *Hardyrun*'s Paper began
“ to be read this Evening, how many remain?
“ This, Sir, is the Tyrant who, by your As-
“ sistance, drives us out of our own Territo-
“ ries; and we may tell our Story in the
“ Words of *Addison*,

“ *'Tis Cæsar's Arms have made Rome's Senate*
“ *little,*

“ *And thinn'd it's Ranks.*

“ This, Sir, is the Mr *Hardyrun*, if there
“ is any such Man (for you know we have an
“ unlucky Instance that a Name standing on
“ our List is no Proof of it's Owner's Existence,
“ at least, not of his standing on two Legs)
“ this, I say, is the Mr *Hardyrun* who, by
“ your unworthy Influence over the weak
“ People who preside in this Society, has
“ been suffered to scandalize the Philosophical
“ Transactions with Instructions for *catching*
“ *Fish with Thorns*, and *making Weavers*
“ *with burnt Packthead*: With Stories of
“ *Stittlebacks* and *Cockchafers*: Who has em-
“ ployed two thirds of one of the Transactions
“ to prove *that Birds can fly*, and *that Fish will*
“ *live in Water*. This is the Writer who has
“ convinced the World,

“ *That with less Reading than makes Felons' scape,*
“ *Less human Genius than God gives an Ape,*

“ a Man may be eminent in the Royal Society,
“ and have his Works honoured with a Place
“ in their Transactions. This—but 'tis enough:

“ I

“ I only meant to teach you a better Knowledge
 “ of yourself and of us; not to expose the
 “ Nakedness of a Body I belong to, for the
 “ Sake of shewing my own Discernment, as
 “ you have so lately done to convince the
 “ World of your imaginary Importance.”

Thus ended this very remarkable Conversation, and immediately after it the Paper, which the still unwearied Secretary had been all this time reading to the Benches. What it was, neither myself nor any of the Company about me seemed to understand, any farther, than that it was on the Subject of a late Earthquake, and that it came from a very eminent Hand.

There is no Aversion so strong, as that taken up against People for deserving Praise. The whole Body, enraged at the Name of a Man, who they saw was adding to the character he had long before established, of knowing more than them all, seemed to determine Vengeance against him; and though the before celebrated Accounts of *Cockchafers* and *Stittle-backs* had passed among them with Applause, and without the least Controversion, no less than three People at once now rose up to condemn this Paper, tho' none of them had heard it. I was unlucky not to have heard the Subject of their Displeasure; but all that could be made out by their Censures of it, was, that one of them had no Faith, a second no Comprehension, and the third no Manners. The Author was much unconcerned at all this; he only very coolly observed, that he began to fancy, by the Reception,

ception, that his Paper had some Merit in it. The President, after thrice plunging his Arm up to the Shoulder, into the green Parchment before mentioned, and drawing it back each time empty, now found even that inexhaustible Store, as he used to think it, exhausted, and hastily dissolved the Assembly.

The *English* Laureat, I am told, confesses to his Friends, that, after the Day of one of his Odes is over, it is his constant Employ, till the Time of the next, to compose another. Such, probably, is the Case of this worthy Officer of the Royal Society: The Employ of the succeeding Week is, perhaps, the collecting Matter for the Business of next Meeting; but with this Disadvantage too, that the Laureate has no body to apply to but himself, while this unfortunate Gentleman is obliged to beg a Piece of this Man, and a Scrap of another, and to bear with the Surliness of one Author, and the Stupidity of another, in hopes of getting a second-handed Essay on a Subject neither of them understood; or a Letter about nothing, from some of their Correspondents.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R III.

Containing certain Admonitions, not
very likely to be regarded.

My dear Lord,

I Concluded my last with the Account of the breaking up of a very grave Assembly; not because I had done with the Subject, but because my Letter was long enough: Accept of the Remainder.

I imagined the Business of the Evening had been over, when the Society was broke up: I was retiring from the Place of the Meeting, full of the Contrast between this and the *French Academy*; when I perceived a great Number of the Members filing off the same Way. I determined to follow them as far as I might, and soon found myself, in consequence of this, in a Coffee-house: We entered a large Room together, and seated ourselves without Ceremony. I quickly saw that this was a Meeting of no more Regularity than that of the Society itself: We were hardly sat down, when one of the Gentlemen began to tell us of a frightful Monster, with Wings and Claws, voided by a Lady, on taking a single Dose of his Worm-Powder; a second, of a living Wolf in one of his Patient's Breasts; and a third, of a Toad in a
Block

Block of Marble : They were all talking together ; and all reasoning, with equal Force, upon the Production of the two First, and the Accretion of the other ; when a very eminent Member of the Body silenced the whole, by telling the Company, he thought they had had Philosophy and such Nonsense enough where they came from, and that he desired they might call a new Subject.

This Exclamation we soon found, however, was not owing to any Enmity in him to Philosophy, which he had no more Aversion to than Knowledge of ; but, full of good Wishes to the Society, he was unable to suppress his Uneasiness any longer, and opened in this Manner : “ It is not a Time now to de-
 “bate about the Trifles we talk of at the
 “ Society ; but to consider Means for our
 “ Preservation. Here’s a busy Fellow sprung
 “ up of a sudden, who seems to intend we
 “ shall not meet any more, at least if a gene-
 “ral Disesteem and Contempt can deter us
 “ from it ; a Fellow, who will neither be
 “ one thing nor another ; who will not be
 “ one of us, and yet will attend our Meet-
 “ ings ; who declares all over the World, that
 “ we know nothing of the Subjects we pretend
 “ to take Cognizance of ; and that of the
 “ Papers that come before us, nine Tenths
 “ are written by Ignorants, whom we are
 “ not able to contradict ; and the rest by Men
 “ of Abilities, who banter us out of our
 “ Credit, and make us return our Thanks for

“ Communications of things which nothing
 “ but an absolute Unacquaintance with Nature
 “ could induce us to believe *existed* : That our
 “ published Transactions are full of the grossest
 “ Absurdities and Errors ; and that since we
 “ have so often refused his private Admonitions
 “ to amend or retract them, he will do it
 “ publicly for us.

“ What Truth there is in so heavy an Ac-
 “ cusation, continued this grave Gentleman, I
 “ don't pretend to determine : I am afraid
 “ there is some : You are able among you,
 “ to judge whether the whole is true. For
 “ my own Part, I would only advise that we
 “ may either mend of our Faults, now the
 “ World is to be told of them, or break up
 “ at once, and evade the Ignominy of being a
 “ Body who persist in known ill Management,
 “ and unquestionable Errors.”

The Person who delivered this, I soon found,
 was of some Weight among the Body ; they
 seemed willing to enter into a serious Consider-
 ation of the Subject ; and it was Decency in
 those who were not Members to withdraw.
 I was of that Number, and here took my final
 Leave of the Royal Society of *London*, very
 earnestly hoping that I may have the good
 Fortune never to meet with an Assembly of
 it's Members again. The Name of the Per-
 son, the wiser Part of the Body seemed at
 present in so much Terror about, I could not
 hear ; but by what I have have seen among
 them, I think so well of his Accusation, that
 I shall

I shall be at some Pains to find him out, and make myself of the Number of his Acquaintance.

Shall I tell you, freely, my Lord, my Opinion of this great Body? It seems composed of a Multitude of Cyphers, with a few significant Figures at their Head. The People able to speak in it, appear to be about Eight; those who do speak, about Four; but it is a very unlucky Circumstance, that these Eight and Four make Twelve, for the People who do speak are not of the Number of those who can. The Secretaries might possibly be worse chosen out of their own Body; but as to their Pr——t, the Case seems otherwise: I had heard him greatly spoken of before I saw *England*; and I have heard him spoken much otherwise of since, *but a Prophet will be without Honour in his own Country*. I have been at the Pains of enquiring thoroughly into his Character, both among his Friends, and among his Enemies; at the Wits Corner in the *Bedford* Coffee-House, and behind the sacred Veil at *Rawthmell's* *; upon the whole, it appears to me, that he is a Man of great Abilities in many Branches of Knowledge, but unluckily in no one that has any Connection with, or Relation to, the Business of the Royal Society; indeed, that he is utterly unacquainted

* A Coffee-House near *Covent-Garden*, where the People who esteem themselves wiser than the rest of the Company, are separated from them by a Curtain.

with all the Sciences in which his Office in this Body requires a discerning and critical Judgment.

In a Society established for the promoting of *Natural Knowledge*, a Skill in the Sciences which primarily regard those Bodies that are the Subjects of it's Researches, in Botany, for Instance, in Zoology, and in Mineralogy, is most immediately necessary; and after this, an equal Knowledge of those Arts, which are concerned in acting upon them, such as Chemistry, Metallurgy, and the like; but I hope it is not too free to suppose this Gentleman perfectly uninformed of the very Principles of all these. If any Body would dispute it, the Absurdities and Errors read to and received with Thanks by the Society, with this Pr——t at their Head; nay, those very Thanks delivered from his own Mouth too, must be allowed abundantly to evince the Truth of it. If it should be urged, that the Terms in which this Officer delivers his own Thanks, and begs Leave to deliver those of the Society, are Words of Form, and are pronounced upon the Spot, before he has Leisure to examine the Merits of the Papers for which he gives them; 'tis easy to answer, That it is in the Power of the Society to alter that *Form*; and that it ought to be in the Power of the Pr——t of such a Body to judge, on a fair Hearing, whether any Paper, on a Subject properly falling under the Cognizance of the Society, deserves the Thanks he is about to return for it, or the Contempt the

the World is afterwards to receive it with. But that the Hurry of the Decision, even if all these Reasons were of no Force, may not argue in Favour of those who would endeavour to persuade the World, that People who speak thus, misrepresent this Gentleman; it is to be observed, that a select Number of these Papers are, after mature Deliberation, printed, and that at the Expence of the Society, and under the Sanction of it's Name; and yet these are as full of Absurdity and Error, as the Business of the Meetings: Nay, such is the Absence of all Discernment, in the Choice of what shall be printed, that this select Number are often the very worst Papers; and such others as had been read before the Body, and would have shewn at least, that some Men of Knowledge did it the Honour of corresponding with it, are carefully picked out, and reserved for the private Use of the Members only; that is to be commemorated in Minutes, which will never be afterwards read, or which, if they were to have that Honour, are sure to be first rendered unintelligible by the Ignorance, the Idleness, or the Ill-nature of the Person selected from the Body, for the Office of drawing them up.

When it has been freely urged to some People here, who really wished well to the Society, that a lasting Infamy must attend these Publications, and an irrecoverable Stain be fixed upon the Body that authorized them; it has been answered, that the Society never concerned

cerned itself about such trivial Matters, but that the Publication was the mere Act of one of the Secretaries, who was therefore alone answerable for the Merits of them: A Subterfuge that seems about of a Piece with that of the Fellow, who after Condemnation for a Murder, persisted in affirming his Innocence, and that upon the excellent Distinction that it was not *he*, but *his Hand* that cut the Throat.

The Secretary of the Royal Society can certainly be no more than the Servant and Instrument of that Body, and all such Evasions on the Part of the Society, in regard to these unlucky Testimonies of their Ignorance, are to be answered, by observing, that if this Secretary heard any particular Paper censured by but one Member of the Body, he would never afterwards be absurd enough to print it.

Nothing tends more to the keeping up the Credit of a public Body, than a proper Choice of it's Officers. Every Man who wishes well to this Society, must therefore wish to see a proper Attention paid to Merit on this Occasion; and every Man who sees what the Society has of late been reduced to, by the Unacquaintance of it's P——t in the Sciences, for the Cultivation of which it was established, must see that the first step toward raising it to Reputation again, must be the chusing a more qualified Person into that Office. If the good Qualities of the present Possessor of it, independent of the immediate Concerns of the Society, should plead, for the

the continuing him in his Post; or, if it should be observed that the present, or some future Period of Time may not admit of a proper Choice of such an Officer, from the Men of the greatest Abilities in these Studies not being Members of the Body, there is an easy Answer even to this; Let a *Committee of Inspection of Papers*, long since recommended to them, as I am informed by their great Enemy, as they call him, be established; let a select Number of the Body be chosen for this Purpose; let three, at least, of the Persons who study each of the several Sciences that relate to the Business of the Society, be of this Number: Let all Papers be first laid before this Committee, to receive their Determination, whether worthy to be read; and, even after such as are approved by them have had that Honour, let the Sense of the whole Society be heard upon them, and let them pass a second Examination before they are ordered to be printed.

In this Case, the necessary Qualifications of the principal Officer would be centered in a very small Compass: An honest Heart, and an open Purse, might do well as Qualifications in him, but, for the rest, *Æsop's King Log* might make as good a Pr——t as any body; or, perhaps, the Society might, some time or other, invent an *Automaton* of Wood and Wires, which should fill the presidential Chair with proper Gravity, and be so constructed, as to get up and sit down at proper Periods; pull off it's Hat, and put it on again, three or four
Times

Times a Night ; and pronounce about six Sentences of Course, always the same, and equally suited to all Occasions : This seems, at present, all that concerns the Office of a Pr——t of this Society ; and, I am apt to believe, all this might be done with less Apparatus than serves to move the facetious Mr Punch in a Puppet-Shew.

If I might be allowed to propose some farther Regulations, out of the very sincere Wishes I have to the Welfare, or, if I may use a more proper Term, the Restoration of the *English* Society, I would propose, That, till this Body should have proved, by it's Publications, that it deserves a Royal Endowment, there should be a Distinction made by it's Members among themselves, according to their several Merits : That the Authors of the Papers that make up the Entertainment, such as it is, should be excused from Contributions ; and that, as to the rest, every Fool should pay for two. Every Man who is acquainted with the Characters of the *English* Academists, will allow, this would not only provide for an Exemption from Expence on the Part of the Men of Use to the Body, a Consideration not too great for standing the Laugh six or eight Times in a Twelvemonth : But it would raise a Fund beside, out of which Rewards might be issued for such Papers as would do real Honour to the Society, and all the indigent ingenious Men of the Kingdom (which, to the great Honour of the Age, are, at least, six Eighths of the ingenious People

People in it) would, by this Means, not only be got into the Society, but would be encouraged to do their utmost toward the raising it into a Reputation. A few of these would render the Committee so strongly recommended to them of Ability to determine what should and what should not be read among them; and would make their Meetings such as it would be to their Honour to have Men of Sense, who were not Members, present at.

In the mean Time, however, as I am willing, for the Credit of the Strangers who frequent their Meetings, to suppose they come to laugh; I am also earnest enough, for the Honour of the Body, to wish them shut out: Let them, till they are upon a better Footing than at present, keep out all People from their Meetings. Let them then talk Nonsense as fast as they please among themselves; and, till such a Committee as is recommended to them, can be established on a tolerable Footing, let them disappoint the Malice of the World, and preserve their own Reputation by publishing no more of their Transactions, and by abolishing the Use of the Letters *F. R. S.* in the Title-Pages of bad Books, and after the Names of mean and ignorant Persons *, till they have recovered so much of their own Credit as to be able to give, by it, an Authority to the one, or a Dignity to the other.

* The noble Author seems, in this Passage, to allude to the Superscription of a Paper Parcel, directed to Mr *Hardyrun*, *F. R. S.* and sent, by the *Neerwoch* Waggon.

If I had not already exceeded the Bounds even of that large Allowance I had established for my Letters to you, it would be a pleasurable Task to engage in a Dissertation on these three Capitals ; but it may be sufficient to convince you of the Rank they hold in the learned World, to observe, That, though their great Use is in the Titles of Books, there is but one Set of Authors who allow them a Place there : If you will look into the latest Publications of the Naturalists of these Times, you will find *Monfieur de Reaumur* of the Number of those who suppress them, and the Author of *The History of Barbadoes* among those who own them. You have by this Time, I dare say, read enough of the Works of these two Authors to know what sort of People those are who are proud of them, and what those who are ashamed of them.

Look farther, my Lord, into the Reputation the Society bears in other Parts of *Europe*, and judge of it by the People who have, tho' courted to it, avoided these imaginarily dignifying Letters. *Linnaeus*, the greatest Botanist of this, or of any Age, is his Name upon the List ? No ! That of *Gronovius* ? No ! That of the late *Dillenius* or *Artedi* ? No ! I forbear to quote the Names that are found there ; but, if you will read them, you will find some of your Acquaintance, whom, I am certain, you will determine to be very worthy Members of such a Society, as I have described this to be. To confess a shameful Truth to you, I do not
know

know a severer Satire upon that Body than a List of it's Members.

It is to be owned, indeed, that there are found there Names of the greatest Eminence in Rank and Learning, but these have servilely been begged to grace the Catalogue, and belong, most of them, to People who never were, nor ever will be, seen at their Meetings. I am to own to you, that I saw a Lord there, and have been told of a few Persons of a higher Rank, famous for their Love of laughing, having been sometimes present; but who ever saw a *Londesdale* or a *Mead* there?

Their late great President, Sir *Hans Sloane*, who, beyond all things in the World, loved, nay, and still loves, Natural History; who favours every body, and every thing that regards it; who, of all Men, was most qualified for President of such a Society, and whose Office, so frequently supplied by the present Possessor of it, under the Name of Vice-president, rendered his Age and Infirmities no Obstacle to his honouring it with his Name in it; at length seems to have found the Body declining in it's Reputation so fast, that it was not easy to think of any other Way to preserve his own but by quitting it.

If we were ever so certain of this, if it were singular in that worthy Gentleman, an ill-natured World might construe it into Caprice, Disgust at particular Persons, or some other private Motive, but that there has been another more recent and more flagrant Instance

of the same Kind, that seems to give too strong a Proof of what was the real Motive in this great Naturalist for abandoning it. The Instance I allude to, is that of a late Secretary, well known to you, and to the whole learned World, for his Accomplishments : You see his Name no longer on the List ; and his Place supplied by one whose Name neither you, nor any body else, perhaps, ever did, or ever would have heard of, but that it stands in the Catalogue with the Title of the Office behind it ; immortalized like that of some Churchwarden on the new Prop of the tottering Edifice it was his Ill-Fortune to be chosen for the temporary Support of. The Name of the Man who once supplied the Place this Officer now fills, might have done Honour to any Society in *Europe* ; he seems to have suffered it to countenance this long after himself could no more bear to hear the Business of it's Meetings : The Body, sensible of the Weight it gave them, are said to have pressed for it's Continuance, though himself should no longer come among them ; to have excused the Duty of his Office, and paid him, nay, accumulated Bounties on him ; but in vain : Subsistence, the Entreaties of the Body from whom he received it, even Bribes set against Indigence itself, were, perhaps, offered, nay, given, in vain. There was no Advantage such a Man would purchase, at the Expence of that Reputation he had laboured to establish in the World : He withdrew from them, and preserved it.

When

When I refer you, my dear Lord, to a List of the Members of this Society, as a Method of judging of the Repute it is in at Home, there is another Caution I am yet to give you, without which you would be apt to judge considerably better of it than it deserves on this Head. This Body seems extremely sensible of the Credit good Names do it, and has found the Means, in many Cases, to have so much of a Man, where it has been impossible to have any more of him. The same Name, in this Country, often belongs to many different People, and when the Society has found one that will do them Credit, but the Possessor of which will not be brought in among them, it is easy for them to find out some body else, who owns the same, and to contrive to get such a Person, one Way or other, in among them.

When I first read over the List of this eminent Body, I was much pleased to find in it the Names of *Warburton* and *Hill*, two Persons whom, of all the World, I wished to have an Opportunity of seeing. My first Care, when I entered the Antichamber, which I did early for that Purpose, was to request a Servant to shew me those Gentlemen, as they passed by. It was with strange Discontent that I found myself unable to discover, in the Face of either of them, the least Glimpse of those Talents which their Works speak them possessed of. But I am to inform you of what I soon after learnt, which was, that these Gentlemen
were

were not the Authors of *The Divine Legation of Moses*, or *The Commentaries on Theophrastus*, but two other People, whose Names were all that the Society was ever likely to know about them.

*Thus Proteus hunted in a nobler Shape,
Became, when seiz'd, a Puppy or an Ape.*

One thing more there is, in regard to the List of this memorable Body, which I transmit to you with this, that I must not omit to mention to you: If you cast your Eye over the last Column of it, which contains the Names of the Foreign Members, you will find one which, but for an (e) displaced, is the same with that of an intimate Acquaintance of ours. It was with some Amazement that, as I sat at the Coffee-House I have already mentioned to you, I read this Name, with *F. R. S.* at the End of it, on the Collar of a fine *Newfoundland* Spaniel, that had good-naturedly laid his shaggy Nose upon my Knee. I was not suffered long to continue in the easy Mistake of supposing this the Name of the Master of the Creature; That stood in Capitals under it, and was one that I was very well acquainted with: On expressing my Astonishment at the *F. R. S.* at the End of the other Denomination on the Collar, I was informed that it belonged to the Creature who wore it, that it was one of two Names by which he was indifferently called by his Master, that it never had belonged to any living

living Creature except the Dog, and that he had been fairly ballotted for, and elected a Fellow, upon the Recommendation of five of the Members of the Body, who knew about as much of his Qualifications as the People who sign Certificates of that Kind among them usually do of the Persons they belong to.

It seems it is a sort of Law in the Regulations of this Body, to have but one of a Family a Member of it at a Time, and that the least qualified ; in Consequence of this, they have elected this Gentleman's Dog, and the omniscient * Mr *Bokur's* Son's Father.

I am,

With the sincerest Respect and Esteem,

My dear Lord,

Your most Obedient

and devoted

H. L. Z.

* It may be proper to remove the Charge of this bold Epithet from the noble Author of these Letters to the Person it is here attributed to : No body ever gave it to him,
we

we imagine, but himself; our Author only banters him with the Repetition of it. Mr *Bokur* in public Conversations freely owns, That his Pupils have no Ideas but what they receive from him; and he as publickly repeats it, as a common Expression of theirs, on being informed of any new Truth: *No body could have known this but God Almighty and Mr Bokur.*

This Assertion, like many others in these Letters, may seem, to a Reader unacquainted with the Royal Society of *London*, and it's Members, too bold for Credibility; we can only observe, that it is, like the rest, a notorious Truth, to which a Number of People have been Witnesses, and which the Persons concerned, though never so much hurt by the Recital, will not dare to deny. There are many Places in which, if we had had a Right to do it, we could have wished to soften the noble Author's Expression, none in which we suspect the least Misrepresentation.



F I N I S.